# A DISCOVRSE OF THE MARRIED AND SINGLE LIFE.

*WHEREIN,*

BY DISCOVERING THE MISERY OF THE one, is plainely declared *the felicity of the* other.

*Bona pudicitia coniugalis, sed melior continentia virginalis.*



*LONDON,*
Imprinted for *Ionas Man.*
1621.



# A DISCOURSE OF THE MARRIED AND SINGLE LIFE.

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Cum paribus certare, & melior conditione certare studeas.



LONDON,

Imprinted for John Clark, 1641.

# The Preface to the Maſculine Reader.

*NEuer was there any thing ſo perfectly good, that by traducing tongues hath not been made to ſeeme euill, neither hath there any thing been ſo abſolutely euill, that either by colourable ſpeeches, or faire pretences may not be made to ſeeme good.*

*Some men apply themſelues to reading onely, to procure matter of contradiction, that what others defend, they would diſproue, and what by others is diſallowed, ſhall by them be highly commended. But ſuch as are wiſe, haue learned to ſuſpend their iudgements in, concerning that which either pleaſeth or diſpleaſeth them, vntill they haue laid ſuch infallible grounds, as may*

*iuſtly cleere them from al ſuſpition, either of folly for approuing that which in it ſelfe is knowne to be ill, or of maliciouſneſſe, for diſprouing that, the goodneſſe whereof (it is likely) they neuer vnderſtood. The Authors intent in this enſuing diſcourſe, is not to breede in mens minds a diſlike of that which in it ſelfe is good, both in reſpect of him that ordained it, as alſo the ends wherefore it was ordained, which are moſt good. But ſince his diſcourſe is of Marriage, he is to be conceiued either as a detector of the miſeries thereof, proceeding rather from the perſons, then the thing it ſelfe, or as a director to the comforts thereof; which chiefly conſiſt in ſuch qualities and diſpoſitions, as are directly contrary to ſuch as here be mentioned. As therefore we haue iuſt occaſion to loue them that ſhew vs a good way, and direct*

*vs in it: ſo are we not to deſpiſe them that by detecting vnto vs the euill way, teach vs to auoide it.*

*The differences that are betwixt the married and the ſingle life, as there was neuer any man ſo wiſe as to know them all, ſo neuer as yet hath any man diſcouered them all, which makes it a poynt of great difficulty for a man to know which is the better, vntill hee haue tasted both; and then ſhall he only learne, that the inferiors of the one doe only exceede the inconueniences of the other.*

*If we ſhould take this Authors opinion, who will perhaps be iudged partiall, hauing neuer tried both, he doth certainly prefer the ſingle before the double, and in ſo doing, will alſo giue vs ſome reaſon why he may be beleeued, becauſe the actions of many of the beſt men haue witneſſed the truth of that which he*

*maintaineth; and ſo much the rather alſo, becauſe there are many reaſons why that ſhould be preferred before this, & but one only, why this ſhould be preferred before that.*

*The temptations of the ſingle life, are ſubiect to perſwade a man to marry; the incumbrances of the married life, to diſſwade a man therefrom. Let vs conſider of that happineſſe wherein man liued before he inioyed the company of a woman, and ſo behold that miſerie wherein he is inwrapped ſince the time he partaked therein; and it will be an argument ſufficient to induce a man to approoue that, which in it ſelfe was good, rather than of that which in it ſelfe was the onely cauſe of the deprauation of that onely good. Let but a man conſider the many qualities, wherewith he that will be married muſt bee burthened, and thoſe few*

*that*

*that will ſerue for the ſingle life, and he ſhall be rather induced to chuſe that whereunto nature of her ſelfe hath fitted him, one only being wanting, than deſire that whereunto there is ſo much requiſite, as it is not almoſt poſsible for a man to attaine in the whole courſe of his life. He that would liue without a wife, needs ſtriue for no other qualitie, but Chaſtitie, all other will offer themſelues; he need only entertaine her. But he that will be married, muſt meaſure both his words and his actions according to the diſpoſition of his wife; he muſt both be diligent in looking to her, that her ſteps goe not awry, and he muſt be alſo carefull to looke to himſelfe, leſt he incurre the ſuſpition of Ielouſie.*

*The ſubiections, that hee muſt yeeld both to her and her kindred, if he be any thing imperious (and ſo he will if he be not a naturall) are moſt intole-*

*intolerable: the cenſures that hee muſt vndergoe, and the hard taxations that will be impoſed vpon him, euen for his priuateſt ſpeeches, will, if he come to know them, make him wiſh he had neuer felt them.*

*Let a man alſo conſider the qualities, wherewith women are indued, which for the moſt part are oppoſite to thoſe of men: as, her wantonneſſe, to his ſobrietie; her frowardneſſe, to his meekeneſſe; her ſtubbornneſſe, to his patience; her pride, to his humilitie; her lightneſſe, to his grauitie; her diſliking, to that which he approueth; her coueting of which he denieth: wherein they iuſtly reſemble the ſhadow of a mans body, which if a man purſue, it will runne from him; if he goe away, it will follow him: this is all the comfort that a man in his choyce can haue, that perhaps it may be his fortune,* inter malos, non habere peſſima:

*amongſt*

amongſt many that are euill, not to light of that which is worſt of all: but as this Prouerbe is, that amongſt blinde men, hee is counted happie that hath but one eye; ſo in a world of miſeries and inconueniences, he is not the worſt, whoſe fortune it is, either to light of the faireſt, or to beare the eaſieſt. Many haue thought it impoſsible to know which is the worſt qualitie of a woman; ſome haue made it a great queſtion, whether it were better for a man to marrie a ſhrew, or a ſheepe, but hardly can it be reſolued. If the former, then is ſhee Tyrannicall; and the greateſt cruelty, is the crueltie of a woman; if the latter, then can ſhe not be endured: for there is no burthen more grieuous than the folly of a woman. Let a man but weigh the infidelity of women, and that in matters of greateſt importance, and then let him iudge what ſecure truſt

can

*can be repoſed in them, by whom he ſhall vnderſtand, not onely Townes and Cities, but alſo Kingdomes and Dominions haue been vtterly ruinated, either by their treacherous practices, or for the ſatisfying of their ambitious humours; ſo that when there ſhall be nothing to reſtraine them, but the feare of the Husbands diſpleaſure, which, when occaſion is offered, is as likely to change the miſchiefes of their intent, as the breath of a man to refell the fury of the winde; or the ſhaking of a ſtraw to daunt the heart of a Lyon; I cannot ſee by what means he can auoide or eſcape deſtruction, that violently caſteth himſelfe vpon the edge of her auer-ſharpe patience.*

*Let a man but further conſider the great difficulty that conſiſteth in the bringing vp of Children, if he haue them; the infinite diſcomfort, if he haue them not. For their bringing vp,*

vp, we see by daily experience, that in their tender yeeres, they are either by too much lenity made to become dissolute, and effeminately prone to all manner of vice, seeing that indulgence is the onely bellowes to kindle the sparke of a corrupt nature; or else by ouer-much seuerity they are made vnapt and vncapeable of any thing that is good: and so the expectation of the chiefest happinesse, is turned into the fruition of the greatest euill: and he that will diligently obserue, shall finde, that children haue by the badnesse of their mothers disposition, bin made the only instrument of their fathers discontentment: yea, and sometime the author of their destruction.

The husband is, by the very institution of marriage, ordained to be the head; and the head was made to rule and gouerne the body. Now, the difficulty that is incident to this regiment, is such, and so great, that few

men

men take pleasure in possessing it, none at all performe it in that manner they should: the greatest wisdome that herein is required, consisteth in the counselling and discouery, as occasion serueth, of his passions, and in the right applying of his affections, according to the condition of his wiues humor. If he loue her too much, then will she condemne him: for plenty alwaies breeds lothsomnes. If he do not manifest his loue in that sort that she desireth or expecteth, then she presently imagineth, that he bestoweth it some-where else; and so being possest of that Ielousie, there is no misery that will not follow of it. If he let her haue her will, souerainety is straight turned into Tyranny: If he abridge her, she then falls into a thousand inconueniences. If he be ready to obey her commandements, then will she be most importunate. If he deny her request, though it be neuer so vnreasonable,

nable, then is he presently iudged vnkinde and hard-hearted.

Many men ouer-venturous, will put their hands into the Hiues for hony; but at the last they are stung with Waspes; and no maruaile is it, where there are more Wasps thã Bees. Yet the stings of a thousand Waspes do not so wound, as the tongue of one woman: for of the one there be many remedies; the other remaineth alwaies incurable: for diseases that be mortall, men should be carefull to preuent, because there remaineth no hope to cure them: and such are they that are herein mentioned, namely, the diseases of marriage, the which when men study to cure, the remedy doth oft-times proue worse, and procure them more danger, then the euil it selfe was likely to haue done: which as it is not vnknown to any that haue obserued the vsuall proceedings of the world, so haue they felt the smart thereof,

*thereof, whose fortune it hath been to partake therein. He therefore that would know the difference betwixt the married, and the single life, shall neither finde the one to be absolute good, nor the other to be altogether euill: but herein he shall see the difference chiefely to consist, that the inconueniences of the one may be remedied when a man wil, the miseries of the other remaine vncurable; which as they are many, so it is not possible to recken them vp: some of them in this discourse are touched, the most remaine discouered, he that plungeth not into all, shall be sure to leape into some; the benefit he shall get by reading of this, is, that though perhaps hee cannot bee forewarned by wisdome to preuent them, yet he may be forewarned with patience to endure them; which is the onely drift which herein is aymed at.*

A discourse

# A DISCOVRSE OF THE MARRIED AND SINGLE LIFE.

## Chap. I.

*A Letter of* Lindorach *the Philosopher, to* Cultibert *King of the Indians, concerning the inconuenience and discommodities of the married Life.*

I Vnderstand that of the cooking, which I thought I neuer should haue vnderstood, for which cause I am inforced to

write that vnto thee, which I neuer thought to haue written.

I heare, thou art about to purchaſe vnto thy ſelfe a wife, and the price that thou muſt giue, is thy liberty; that of a King, thou wilt make thy ſelfe a Vaſſall; of a Lord, a ſeruant; and of a man of wit and vnderſtanding, wilt ſhew thy ſelfe to bee voyd of both.

I vnderſtand, thou beareſt on thy head the crown of India: but looke vnto thy ſelfe, thou doſt not beare another of patience, or to ſpeake more properly,

ly, of folly, and perhaps one worse then both, that thou dost cause other men to frame and publish: the proceeding against malefactors, will now bring to thy house for thy daily expence, a Notary and Examiner, a dayly informer and publisher of the whole proceedings of thy life.

And to be briefe, that thou wilt bring a Queene ouer the Indians; a mischiefe ouer thy mother, a Lady ouer thy seruants, a Tyrant ouer thy riches, and a madnesse ouer thine owne head.

The Indians reioyce at it, hoping, that thou with thy Mistris, shalt make a cruell station of them.

The wife which thou shalt take with her imperiousnesse, shall make a most cruell example of thee.

The people of Antia are sorrowfull, fearing that whereas they are now gouerned of one that hath reason, they shall be then ruled by a man that is gouerned of a woman without reason; thy mother lamenteth, for that in the day wherein the insolency of a daughter in law shall interre

terre the duty of a naturall sonne.

Thy seruants are grieued, that whereas now their estate is miserable, in being seruants vnto a mistris, they shalbe then most miserable, in being seruants to a seruant.

Thy riches seeme to complaine, for that thy treasury and thy store, which ought to be imployed in the honorable reward of seruants, and especially of souldiers, is turned into wantonnesse, into Iewels, into Chaines, into Rings, into Braceletts, into

Girdles, into Frontlets, and other such like things that tend to the adorning of the Wife, and vndoing of the Husband.

Thou onely in so great misery, glad and merry, goest laughing to the place of Iustice, and singing, when thou art at the Tribunall of that sentence that toucheth thy selfe.

The seruants alwaies goe with a slow pace to the Inchanter.

The Colt is carried vnwillingly to the bridle. The Bullock is brought by force to the yoke. The thiefe is drawne

drawne by violence to the ſtocks, and ſo to the halter.

Yet thou runneſt violently, and ioyfully to thy Inchanter, to thy bridle, to thy yoke, to thy ſtocks, and to thy halter.

O man, thou deſerueſt double pitty and compaſſion. Firſt, becauſe thou art miſerable: ſecondly, becauſe thou art blind, and doſt not ſee thy miſery. Thou and I doe both of vs offend, through folly thou, becauſe by marrying, thou perſwadeſt thy ſelfe to find contentation in thy minde by thy wife: And I, in thin-

king by writing vnto thee, to finde fidelity, and present change in thee.

As for my folly, it is much lesse then thine, for that I attempt a thing, howsoeuer not easie, yet at the least possible; and thou hopest for that which both is hard, and also impossible euer to be done.

The letter which I write vnto thee, I know thou wilt reade it laughing: but whensoeuer thou readest it, know that I haue writ it sorrowing.

And know further, that thou wilt not laugh so much

much at my letter, as others hereafter will laugh at thy harme.

Now if thou shalt despise my counsell, yet grant at the least my request, that though perhaps thou maist cast away my words, yet keepe this my letter by thee, and after a little time that thou hast beene with thy Spouse, turne her to reade it; and if in reading of it, she doe not lift her face vp to heauen, if she do not turne vp the white of her eye; if she do not strike her nailes vpon her teeth, if she doe not beate thee vpon thy

thy cheekes; if ſhe doe not ruffle and diſorder thy beard; if ſhee doe not ſmite thee vpon thy breſt: Then am I no Philoſopher, then am I no man, then is thy wife no woman.

For that beleeue me, if thou wilt belieue the truth, that to marry, and to repent, are as neere alike one to the other, as to day & to morrow; ſo that if thou meaneſt to marry to day, thou ſhalt be ſure to repent to morrow.

CHAP.

## Chap. II.

*A Letter of* Lindorach, *wherein is declared the conditions of many married folkes, chiefly of the manners & conditions of Wiues.*

HArd and opposite, euen as *Scilla* and *Charibdis*, are the show of diuers conditions, the which it is necessary that from time to time I doe propound them vnto thee, that thereby thou maiest see, wherevnto wiues of necessity do often slide, and with them draw their husbands vnto danger.

The wife which thou hast

haſt to take, but I miſtake my ſelfe, and will returne, the wife of whom thou art to be taken, ſhee muſt for her being, either be faire or foule.

If ſhee be faire, ſhee will then be adorned, if foule, ſhe will deſerue to be reiected: if ſhee be faire, ſhee ſhalbe loued of many; if foule, ſhe ſhalbe abhorred of all.

For a man to keepe that to himſelfe, which is beloued of many, is hard to poſſeſſe: that which is abhorred of all, is noyſome.

If

If the be faire, many will enuy thee.

If foule, all men will pitty thee: and whoſo is enuied or pitied, is alike vnfortunate.

If ſhe be faire, ſhee wilbe proud: for pride accompanieth beauty, euen as the ſhadow doth the body.

If ſhe be foule, then will ſhee bee iealous: for if ſhee haue any wit, ſhe may in her glaſſe eſpy her wāt of beauty, and knowing thee not to be blinde, ſhe will ſoone imagine that thou ſeekeſt other company, and by this perſwaſion will perhaps pro-

procure ſome alſo for her ſelfe.

If ſhe be faire, then will ſhe neuer conſent that the law is fulfilled, which ſaith, *Thou ſhalt not couet thy neighbours wife.*

If ſhe be foule, ſhe wil not deſire to haue that precept fulfiled which ſaith, *Thou ſhalt leaue father and mother, and follow thy wife.*

If ſhe be faire, ſhe can neuer goe abroade, but ſhee ſhalbe like the marke in a But, whereat the minds and eyes of all men doe ſhoote and ayme; or as an Owle ſet vpon a Pearch, about whom

whom all other birds doe flye and wonder.

If ſhe be foule, ſhe is like the Snake or Adder that a man no ſooner ſees, but preſently turnes away his eyes from beholding it.

If ſhe be faire, and be at meetings and goſſippings, ſhe can neuer be named, but as the praier which is made vnto the Sunne, which being long, and conuenient that it ſhould be pronounced with one breath, ſighed, as it is ſaid.

If ſhe be foule, then is ſhe like the drawling diſeaſe, at the very naming whereof, euery

euery man by nature is moued in Spirit.

If she be faire, all thy busineſſe abroad is ſure to goe to wracke: for her bewitching and attracting beauty will inforce thee to ſtay within dores.

If ſhe be foule, thy buſines at home will go worſe: for that by reaſon of her noyſomneſſe, thou wilt haue but little liſt to bee at home.

What then ſhall I ſay more concerning thoſe loue qualities?

If ſhe be faire, it will giue cauſe to the world to thinke

thinke her dishoneſt; for that beauty and chaſtitie ſeldome dwell vnder one and the ſame roofe.

If ſhe be foule, the world ſhall haue occaſion to iudge thee blind, and a religious obſeruer of the Feaſt of *Venus*, the faire will make thee doubt of keeping thine owne, with loſſe of labour and infamy.

The foule will cauſe thee to ſeeke other mens, with danger of life, honour and ſoule.

If ſhe be faire, thy houſe ſhall then bee a Stage, the people Spectators, and thy

wife the Actor of a Comedy.

If she be foule, thy house wilbe hell, thy wife the diuell, and thy selfe the miserable soule tormented.

If thy wife which thou wilt take, be yong, shee will alway be importunate for her better attyring.

If old, her neuer-leauing to counsell thee, wilbe intolerable.

If she be yong, thy heart wilbe alwaies pricked with feare of infamy.

If old, thy thoughts will bee alwaies troubled with her inequality of yeeres.

If

If yong, shee knowes not how to gouerne thy house.

If she be old, she will neuer be able, the one wil not haue wit to gouerne, nor the other strength to beare children.

If shee be poore, then looke to haue with her vnhappinesse.

If rich, then expect pride.

If she be poore, prepare then to consume thy patrimony, perhaps before thy matrimony.

If rich, bee ready to bee her slaue, not her companion, and thinke thy selfe to bee made of her feete,

not that ſhee was made of thy rib.

But let not any thing that I tell thee of marriage, ſeeme ſtrange; for I write it not ſo much as a matter belonging to thee and thy equals, but rather to men of another degree and condition. And to returne to what I ſaid.

If that thy wife bee meane, then ſhall ſhee be deſpiſed.

If ſhee be noble, then will ſhe be diſdainefull.

If thou takeſt one that wanteth friends, then ſhalt thou not be eſteemed: if ſhe

she hath many friends, it is not possible for thee to tame her.

If thou takest her of a better degree then thy self, her brethren will not bee thy kinsmen, but thy masters; her father will not be thy father in law, but thy Lord.

If thou takest her of a lower degree, then must thou be protector ouer her friends, so that whereas the one sort will alwaies bee imperiously commanding of thee, the other sort will neuer leaue needy intreating of thee.

If perhaps honeſt, ſhe will expect, that for hauing that vertue, thou ſhouldeſt beare with her in all other vices.

If diſhoneſt, I omit what to ſay: then come all miſeries. Dores and windows muſt be ſhut, eies and eares muſt be open. Then euery thing is diligently looked into, euery thing is harkned carefully after and obſerued, all her doings being feared: then would there be putting chaines to her hands, making lawes for her feete, and reſtraint for her eies: then is there

ſtrict

ſtrict account kept of her paces, of motions, of her geſtures, of the ſignes ſhe maketh, of her writings, of her ſpeeches, yea euen of the turning of her eies. If thou makeſt the ſuſpition known, how art thou pointed at, as an infamous man? if thou keepeſt it ſecret, thou art condemned as an ignorant perſon. And if ſhe be diſhoneſt & ſhameleſſe, ſhe will publiſh her owne ſhame: If thou ſuffereſt her to liue ſo, by that meanes ſhe becommeth worſe: for ſhe who once loſeth her honor, there is as much hope

of amendment, as there is of wooll that once was died blacke, euer to become white againe.

If thy wife be a widdow, shee will alwaies be either praising or praying for her first husband.

If a maide, she is then vnacquainted with thy conditions, and vnexpert in wiues duty and businesse.

If simple, then must thou bee beholding to thy neighbours to gouerne thy house.

If witty, then her husband must euen commend himselfe to God, the simplicitie

plicitie of the one ſuffreth houſhold matters to go vp and downe. The wittines of the other, will almoſt make the husband diſtract of his little wit.

If barren, the husband liues then in great diſcontent, eſteeming himſelfe to be in hatred with God and nature, in being denied that comfort, for which chiefly he married: And not giuing him the fruite of that bleſſing, the want whereof maketh him reproachfull, whereby he ſhameth to accompany with men, as ſeeming himſelfe to be leſſe then

then a man. And seeing other mens children, hee greeueth, and wisheth, that the worst of them were his, and so seeketh carefully to adopt some other mans child.

If thy wife be fruitfull, so that she hath many children that increase much, both the charge in bringing of them vp, and thy trouble in looking to them, should make busines for thy selfe; thou must then prouide dainty meates, rich apparell, and other strange delights, diligent Nurses, worshipfull Gof-

sips,

sips, and learned Schoolemasters: thou must satisfie her fantasticall desires, in her time of being with child, and her troublesome frowardnesse, night-cries of children, and the importunate demands of Nurses, and oftentimes the negligence of Seruants, losing more then the diligence of the master can gaine.

If thy children be good, and it fortune that they die, that greeueth thee much.

If they proue ill, and liue, that greeueth thee more.

If they be good and die,

the father muſt comfort himſelfe and the mother, from the fatherly ſorrow of ſuch mishaps as are befalne to them, then ſhall the father know that all his paſſed ioyes giue place to thoſe piercing ſorrowes.

If the children being good, doe liue, then the father greeueth he cannot bring them vp according to his deſire, or their deſert, alſo hee greeueth that hee hath not ſo many poſſeſſions as ſonnes.

If they liue and proue euill, the father lamenteth that euer hee had begot them,

them, and ſighes that euer he married.

If hee chance to haue daughters, he can neither chuſe, nor ſo gouerne them, but that they wilbe beloued, ſued vnto, and followed.

If they be faire, it is hard to keepe them; if they be foule, it is hard to beſtow them.

If they be noble, it behoueth the father to ſeeke husbands of like degree.

If they want their dowry or honour, the father hath then all the care, to him onely remaineth trouble and

and trauaile.

If the daughters marry againſt the will of their fathers, the father is diſhonoured.

If they ſtay and marry with their fathers conſent, he then reſteth in bonds; and when he hopeth to be quit of trouble, hee then falles into great troubles by them or their children, &c. he muſt ſupply all their wants: the daughters are alwaies complayning, and ſometimes returne to the father. The ſonnes bring their wiues to the father, and which is more intole-

rable,

rable, the grand-child hopeth to be made heire.

If the wife be sharpe and haſty, thou imagineſt shee loueth others beſides thee.

If shee fawne vpon thee, then thou maiſt well perſwade thy ſelfe, that either formerly shee hath deceiued thee, or now intendeth to deceiue thee.

If shee be merry, thou thinkeſt it is, becauſe shee hath receiued ſome good newes from her Louers.

If she be ſad, thou thinkeſt, ſome new loue tormenteth her.

If shee be good, thou

feareſt

feareſt she will die before thee.

If shee be ill, thou deſireſt her death euery day.

If she be brauely apparelled, then art thou iealous.

If she be careleſly apparelled, then art thou offended.

If thou apparelleſt her gallantly, thou makeſt her to be the more gazed at.

If thou keepeſt her meanly, she diſdaineth it: for the one, thy neighbours and friends will accuſe thee of too much ſoftneſſe, and for the other, they wil condemne

demne thee for very couetousnesse.

If shee conuerse with men, thou feareſt they be adulterers.

If with women, thou imagineſt they be Bawdes.

If she conuerse with her kinred, thou ſuſpecteſt thy goods.

If with ſtrangers, then are thou iealous of thine honour.

If thou leaueſt her without a watch, thou art perſwaded that shee ſeekes by meanes of opportunitie, which maketh theeues whē it is offered them.

If thou beeſt watchfull ouer her thy ſelfe, ſhe ſhall be conſtrained to erre, for want of neceſſaries, which thou (perhaps) denieſt her. For it is the nature of women, to be quieted with abundance, whereas they are diſcontented with ſcarcity.

If thou ſetteſt others to watch her, then they themſelues doe that which they prohibit others, for which there muſt bee others to watch alſo ouer them; but howſoeuer, thy wife is either honeſt, or elſe ſhee is diſhoneſt.

If honeſt, ſhe ought not

to

to be guided: if diſhoneſt, shee cannot be guided enough.

If thou giueſt her the gouernment of thy whole houſe, thou muſt then ſerue her at command.

If thou reſerueſt any part thereof to thy ſelfe, shee then complaineth of the little truſt thou repoſeſt in her.

If thou makeſt her gouernour of all, thou maiſt not doe any thing, thou canſt not be in any place, thou canſt not inuite any friend, thou canſt not giue any thing, but she knoweth

of it, & muſt firſt giue thee leaue: nay, often-times therein ſhee breakes with thee, and ſo cauſeth that thou canſt not be ſo good as thy word, conſtraining to haue ſaw, for that wherein thou art not faulty.

If thou giueſt her a limited gouernment, either ſhe will not accept it, or elſe ſhe will not execute it, finding her ſelfe diſcontent, ſeeing that there is no difference made betwixt her and thy ſeruants.

If ſhee praiſe any, thou feareſt that ſhe loueth him whom ſhe praiſeth.

If

If she blameth any, thou thinkest she dissembles; for that it often happens that wit in women blames most those whom they best loue.

If she can write and read, shee then writeth vnto her Louers, and receiueth lettets from them also.

If shee can neither read nor write, shee causeth others to read and write for her; and when thou art from home, and doest but write to her, others must see what thou writest.

If shee can read printed Bookes, in reading, shee mingleth that of the Ser-

pent, with that of the Scorpion.

If ſhee cannot read, then being idle, ſhe hath many euill thoughts, which produce and grow to euill actions.

If ſhe be ſlow of ſpeech, then thou remembreſt, that where the ſtream is ſloweſt, the water is deepeſt.

If ſhee commands one ſeruant more than another, then thou feareſt that ſhee loueth him whoſe buſineſſe beſt contenteth her, and whom alſo ſhee commandeth not, thou perſwadeſt thy ſelfe that ſhee loueth him

him alſo, for that, in not commanding him ſome labour.

If ſhee ouer-liue thee, thou dyeſt with doubt of honour.

If thou ouer-liueſt her, thou remayneſt with the troubles of thy houſe; then muſt thou bethink thy ſelf, in burying of thy old wife, how to get thee a new.

If thou haſt Children, thou careſt how to gouern them.

If thou haſt none, thou muſt reſtore halfe of thy wiues dowry.

If thou marrieſt a new

wife that hath children, then thine owne will go to wracke, and perhaps neither of them both will thriue.

If she be a widow, and hath no children, thou shalt be in doubt also not to haue the benefit of marriage.

If thou giuest her too much liberty, then thou spoylest her.

If thou giuest her too little, then wil she be angry.

If thou sufferest her to beautifie her selfe, the world will say thou art too holy, meaning too horney.

If

If she would doe it, and thou dost contradict it, then wilt thou seeme too rigorous.

If thou dwellest in the towne, thy children are brought vp without manners or vertue.

If in the City, thy wiues louers will alwaies be soliciting her either by letters or messengers, and when thou art at home, she will alwaies be quarrelling, and when thou art abroade, thou shalt neuer be free of suspition.

If thou letteſt her bee seene, either abroade or within

within dores, then beware the horne.

If thou keepeſt her cloſe vp, then neuer looke to be at reſt.

If thou leaueſt her alone when thou goeſt abroad, thou doſt very ill; for though perhaps ſhee may not offend, yet yong womens fame is for the moſt part ſlippery.

If for company ſake thou doſt couple her with a young woman, they two wilbe ſure to agree in committing euill, to pardon one the other.

If thou leaueſt an old wo-

woman with her, then thou feedeſt a Bawd.

If a man of lowe condition loue her, thou canſt not perceiue it.

If a Noble man loue her, then muſt thou be content to heare and ſee, but in any caſe be ſilent.

If ſhe be beloued, and doe not manifeſt it vnto thee, thou haſt reaſon to be iealous.

If ſhe do make it knowne to thee, it is either becauſe ſhee feares that thou haſt knowledge of it already, or elſe ſhe tells thee, to indanger thee ſome way, or elſe

elſe ſhe doth but draw the hooke with the one hand, to put it to againe with the other; or at leaſt ſhe doth it, thinking thereby to obtaine thy greater truſt, that ſo with more ſecurity ſhe may after deceyue thee.

If ſhe loue thee not, thou eateſt and ſleepeſt with an enemy.

If ſhe ſeeme to loue thee, thou eateſt and drinkeſt, and ſleepeſt with a ſpie.

If ſhe loue thee not, art thou not alwaies ſorrowfull?

If ſhe breedeth child, then haſt thou trauell.

If

If ſhe beare it, thou haſt more:

If ſhe be ſicke, thou art amazed.

If ſhe ſo dies, thou art much perplexed.

If thou marrieſt a wife againſt her parents will, then is it likely thou ſhall loſe her dowry, and therewith getteſt many enemies.

If thou takeſt her againſt the will of thine owne friends, thou art in danger to loſe thine owne inheritance, and getteſt hatred for her.

If ſhe be forced to take thee then is there no peace.

If

If thou beeſt forced to take her, there is alwaies ſtrife.

If thou marrieſt her for loue onely, then after the firſt affection is extinguiſhed, and her prime of beauty paſt, her loue changeth to hatred, and loue was made onely for marriages, but it is like flowers which the Sunne quickly withereth.

If thou takeſt one of another mans chooſing, it behoueth thee to look that her dowry bee qualified, whereby thou mayſt afterwards liue ſo, that thou be not

not iealous of her, nor diſcerne that others bee iealous of thee.

If thy parents compell thee to marry her, then haſt thou no ioy, and reuengeſt anger vpon thy wife.

If her friends force her to take thee, ſhe liueth alwayes ſorrowfull, and reuengeth her ſelfe vpon thee: and what ioy or peace can be expected in that houſe, where one of the Principalls is alwaies diſcontented: there neuer hapneth one earthquake, but it maketh the buildings beate together. Where the

Ocean

Ocean is troubled, all lesse springs must needs partake; when the Sunne is eclipsed, all the seuen Elements suffer; and when the head akes, all the other members languish.

If the mother and kindred of thy wife which thou wilt take, were chast, thou then feareſt, remembring that nothing vnder the Sun continueth stable, as Seeds & Vines alter with time, and all things grow worse with age, and how Vertue is altered with Vice, and Vice with Vertue.

If they were dishonest,

thou

thou knoweſt that a Heifer bringeth not forth a Fawn; and when thou ſeeſt an alteration, thou knoweſt that euery one is more prone to euill then good.

If her father were a foole, thou thinkeſt ſhee muſt be like her father.

If wiſe, thou knoweſt that wiſe fathers haue oftentimes fooliſh children. And the reaſon is, that when they beget them, their wiſe mindes are oftentimes beſotted of fooliſh matters.

If before ſhee was married to thee, ſhe had other Loues, thou haſt cauſe to

feare, left they continue ſo to her ſtill.

If ſhee knew not how to loue before ſhee was married, thou feareſt that ſhee doth it neither now effectually.

If in her maydenhead ſhe had thee onely a ſuter, and was then vnkinde vnto thee, that will often cauſe hatred betweene you euen till death.

If ſhe then graunted thy requeſt being vnmarried, thou maiſt iuſtly feare, ſhe will doe as much for others when as ſhe is married.

If thou fulfilleſt all her deſires,

deſires, thou makeſt her vnbridled and licentious.

If thou doeſt not fulfill them, ſhee will then be alwayes melancholy and wrathfull.

If thou doſt then reproue her, ſhe ſinnes of cuſtome.

If thou threatneſt her, ſhe calls her friends to witneſſe.

If thou entreateſt her, ſhe laughes thee to ſcorne among thy neighbours.

If thou correcteſt her, ſhe will neuer be pleaſed.

If thou forgiueſt her, ſhe will be intolerable.

If thou doſt not clothe

her honorably, thou leaueſt her honor in great hazard.

If when thou goeſt to bed, thou findeſt her cold, thou feareſt leſt ſhee hath bin far from her owne bed.

If thou feeleſt her hot, thou imagineſt ſhee hath beene about ſome other mans buſineſſe.

If ſhe haue beene thy fellow Citizen, then will ſhee be much familiar with you. If ſhe was a ſtrãger, thẽ haſt thou not knowne her life.

If thou haſt loued her, know, that after faire weather, comes raine, and after loue, hatred.

If

If thou haſt not loued her, then haſt thou no pleaſure with her.

If thou doeſt reueale any ſecrets vnto her, ſhe diſcloſeth them.

If thou keepeſt them frō her, then ſhee complaineth that thou truſteſt her not.

If thou doſt not adorne and decke her vp, ſhe will neuer care for thee.

If thou doeſt adorne her, then wil ſhe pleaſe others as well as thee; and if ſhe deſire to pleaſe thee only, ſhe would not then beautifie her ſelfe in that morning when ſhe is to goe abroad:

but rather in the euening when ſhe is to come vnto thy bed.

## Chap. III.

*Wherein is diſcourſed of other conditions of many folkes.*

COncerning the eſtate and conditions of the married life, what ſhall I ſay more?

If thou art poore, hauing a wife, and beholding thy children, thou art conſumed euen with care of enriching thy ſelfe.

If thou art rich, then art thou troubled with care of keeping of them, as alſo tormen-

tormented with feare of loſing them, for that as before I ſaid, I doe not ſo much ſpeake vnto thee that art a King, as to other men that are not of the honour, but of that humour that thou art in againe.

If thou beeſt poore, thou learneſt leaſt.

If either pouerty, or the prouocation of all euill, or riches, the corrupters of chaſte mindes, doe oppugne, and in time cleaue, wiſh away the honeſty of thy wife.

If thou beeſt rich, thou art much afraid, leſt wan-

ton ease and delicate lasciuiousnesse afford too many imaginations to the hurt of thy Spouse.

If thou liuest alone, then thou liuest contrary to the custome of all humanity.

If thou hast much acquaintance, thou art then suspected of much deceit.

If thou hast no friends, thou wantest then the chiefest good that is in the world.

If thou hast many friends, thou pleasest not thy wife, for that she couets alwayes to haue all thy loue bestowed on her.

If

If thou beeſt married to a yong woman, ſhe is ouer-quicke and haſty.

If to an old wife, ſhe is ouer-flow: and herein a yong wife vnſinnewes the body of his chiefe ſtrength, waſteth and conſumeth thy pleaſant age, brings for thee children of little value and account, and an old wife becommeth iealous, thou art called foole, hauing wealth, and wanting poſterity to inherite it.

If thou beeſt ſtudious, thou canſt not intend thy booke and thy wife too.

If the ſtudy of hunting, and

and of Armes doe delight thee, either the one, or the other displeaseth thy wife, and breeds contrariety in thy matrimony.

If thou beest a Tradesman, and intending thy businesse and affaires, thou canst haue but little care of thy wife.

If thou beest a Gentleman, a Citty set on a hill cannot be hid. What then wilt thou doe in such a necessity? Hence the Hammer, thence the Anuill; here the dore, there the wall; whatsoeuer thou willest, vexation and trouble

is

is on all ſides; to one of thoſe extremities thou art forced. That which the husband oftentimes deſireth, that, for the moſt part, the wife contemneth.

But if thou ſhalt ſay vnto me, that I carry things too much one way, and too little another way, and that thou wilt bee aduiſed to finde the golden way, betwixt ſo great exceſſe; I anſwere thee, that if thou canſt poſſibly finde a wife, that is neither faire, nor foule; neither rich, nor poore; neither baſe, nor noble; neither fooliſh, nor witty;

witty; neither, honeſt, nor diſhoneſt; neither barren nor fruitfull; and as I haue diſcourſed, through all the propoſed conditions: and on the contrary, if there can a husband be found, that is neither rich, nor poore; neither old, nor yong; neither baſe, nor noble; neither fooliſh, nor witty; neither honeſt, nor diſhoneſt, nor in any of thoſe extremes which I haue before touched; then will I content my ſelfe that thou beeſt married.

But where are they, that we may ſeeke them? when ſhall

ſhall they come, that wee may behold them?

## Chap. IIII.

*Concerning ſome other miſeries incident to the married life.*

O Wretched man, if thou didſt but know how deare it did coſt thee to be married, that in the very day in which thou art to bee betrothed vnto a wife, thou makeſt thy ſelfe more ready to be intombed in thy graue.

A wife, ah a wife! alaſſe, ther's not one member, that will not coſt the weight in gold.

gold. Her haire is valued at as much as the Pearles, the Imbroderings, the Aglets and Roſes, with which ſhee adorneth her ſelfe.

Her forehead, as the Frontlets which ſhe weareth therevpon.

Her Eares, as the Pendants that hang thereat.

Her eyelids and her breath, as the odours and ſweete perfumes which ſhe imployeth therein.

Her Cheekes, as the painting both of white and red which ſhe conſumeth.

Her lips, as with the ſoft furres

furres wherewith ſhe ouer-ſhadoweth them.

Her mouth, as the dainty meates which ſhee miniſtreth vnto it.

Her Necke, as the Curralls and Amber, the chaines and other wanton toyes that ſhe hangeth about it.

Her breſts, as the precious ſtones wherewith ſhe inuironeth them.

Her ſhoulders, as the vayles and Cypres wherewith ſhe is couered.

Her armes, as the bracelets which ſhe weareth.

Her hands, as the ſweet waters, precious oyntment

ments, perfumed Gloues, and gallant Fannes wherewith ſhe adorneth her ſelf.

Her fingers, as the Iewels and Rings, wherewith ſhe couereth them.

Her ſides, as the Girdle wherewith ſhe imbraceth her ſelfe.

Her feete, as the ſhooes which ſhee ſpendeth vpon them.

Finally, her whole body, as the Garments wherewith ſhe is clothed, which euery day ſhe changeth and rechangeth, yet being vnſatiable, is neuer pleaſed nor contented.

Her

Her eies being such, as no sooner seeing such hangings, such ornaments, but straight shee coueteth them.

Her tongue so impudent, that shee no sooner seeth them, but presently demandeth them.

Shee will be alwayes demanding of apparell, and must alwayes haue Chests full.

Shee careth little though her children goe as naked as the Trees in December, though her house bee as much noted as that of the Fencers: So that for get-

ting her apparell, her husband becomes a begger, and they are faine in the end to betake themselues to an Hospitall.

In the day, the husband must labour abroad, and in the night at home, strife & contention is in his bed; trouble and sorrow at his Table; when hee thinketh to eate, then is he compelled to brawle; and when hee thinketh to sleepe, hee must hearken to her reuilings.

O wretched man that intendest to marry a woman! thou must goe vnto the

eyes

eyes of *Argus*, to keep her; the eares of *Faues*, to hearken after her; the noſethrils of a Wolfe, that thou maiſt ſmel out her defects: The tongue of a Fiſh, that thou be ſilent at her brawlings: The ſtomake of an Eſtridge, to diſgeſt her reproches: The necke of a Bull, to ſupport the heauy yoke: The Crowne of *Pan* wouen with thornes, to coner thy horne: The feete of a Hart to runne from her ſnares: The riches of *Craſſus*, or rather of *Cræſus*, to ſatisfie her: The luſt of a Spaniard to content

her: The ſtrength of a horſe to endure her: The drowſineſſe of a Slow-worme, to ſleepe amidſt her chidings: The hunger of *Briſeton*, to deuoure her clamours.

Wee mortall men commit all things to the truſt of other men; but it is wel, ſo long as we commit them to the truſt of men: As our fields to the Husbandmen: our Heards to the Paſtors: our Gardens to the Gardiners: our houſe to our men-ſeruants: our chambers to our Maid-ſeruants: our ſecrets to our friends: our wri-

writings to the Notaries: our Robes to the Aduocates: our Merchandizes to the Mariners: our sons to their Tutors: our daughters to their friends: our heads to the Barbers: our liues to the Phisicians: But our honour, which is more precious then all these, we commit into the hands of a silly woman, in such sort, as we must neuer againe demand it, neuer can release it, nor neuer can be sure of it.

Thou canst not be called a Blasphemer, if thou didst neuer curse, nor a periured

companion, if thou didst not ſweare, in that which is falſe; nor a deſpiſer, if thou didſt not contemne the gods; nor an homicide, if thou neuer committedſt murther; nor a thiefe, if thou didſt neuer ſteale; nor a coozener, if thou didſt neuer deceiue; nor a trecherous perſon, if thou didſt neuer deale falſly with thy friends; nor an adulterer, if by no meanes thou didſt neuer attempt another mans wife; neither can any of theſe faults bee imputed vnto thee, if thou didſt neuer offend, nor de-

sire to commit them. But thou maist be iniuried by a greater matter then all these, if (though without thy will, or without thy fault) another man goeth with desire to thy wife.

O wretched man, it is a wonder to see, what danger thou art come in: All other things are seene and considered on, before they are bought: A house, if it be to be bought, is marked and obserued: the Instruments are heard; the Melons are smelled vnto; the wine is tasted of; the cloth is felt; the timber is fitted;

the glaſſes are touched, to ſee if they be ſound on all ſides; the Lute is choſen; the ſtrings are ſtretched; the wood is meaſured; the ſhooes are pulled on; the Horſe is backed; the Cow is choſen out: and to bee briefe, all things are proued, when we buy them to gaine by them. But if in our marriage the bargaine be once concluded, then art thou married to the Sunne, thou canſt neuer refuſe, whilſt thou liueſt, but muſt remaine with thy wife euen vntill death: ſhe is taken blind-fold, as men vſe

to

to play at blinde; as the Cat, or rather the Cat in the ſacke, ſhe is not proued, leſt ſhe ſhould be refuſed vpon the triall: neither is ſhee ſeene, for that if ſhee were, ſhe would ſooner be refuſed then accepted.

Whoſoeuer will buy fleſh, they may goe to the Shambles, and pay for it: and if they will haue fiſh, they may haue it in the Fiſh-market.

And ſhe that will be married, let her pay her husband firſt for taking of her. It is marualle if ſhee ſhould ſtand, and be freſh & new.

It

It is ſtrange that her friends ſhould haue ſuch deſire to hunt her out of the houſe, and that ſhe is ſo willing oftentimes, to returne againe. Looke how much the greater thy bargaine ſeemes to be, ſo much the worſe is the fleſh, and looke by how much the richer thy wife is in dowry, ſo much the poorer is ſhee in vertue.

If thy Garments do not fit thee well, thou mayſt cauſe them to be made againe.

If thou haſt a Ring, that is either too great or too little

little for thee, thou mayſt cauſe it to be new caſt.

If the money thou haſt, like thee not, thou mayſt change it.

If one houſe like thee not, thou mayſt remoue to another.

If thy field pleaſe thee not, thou canſt ſell it away.

If a ſeruant be not for thy purpoſe, thou mayſt diſmiſſe him.

If thou haſt a ſiſter that is offenſiue vnto thee, thou mayſt marry her to a husband.

But thy wife, howſoeuer ſhe come vnto thee, thou

thou must of neceſſity keepe her vntill her death. If her friends would bid thee marry her for a touch, as when we buy Capons: Or for a taſte, as we vſe to buy Millions: Or for a proofe, as we vſe to buy Shoes: Or for a time, as we vſe to buy our Cattell: Or for ſo long as ſhe ſhall remaine good, as we vſe to buy horſes: Or vntill wee might change her as we doe our money: Then would I counſell thee to take her, and to proue her: if ſhe like thee, to hold her: if not, refuſe her,

her, and all ſhe brought, euen as thou wert married to her.

But the law is ouer-ſtrict, and for this cauſe is it ouer-ſtrict, for that if the ſecond day thou ſhouldeſt refuſe her, and all thou hadſt with her, then no woman will euer care for thee againe.

Thy friends will neuer more ſpeake for thee: thy enemies will begin to reioyce at thee: thy parents wilbe ſorry for thee: thy daughters will diminiſh thy ſubſtance: thy houſe will increaſe thy trauell: the

the honour of thy family will begin to die: thy wife will begin to ſhorten thy life: thy ſonnes will begin to deſire thy death: thy dowry will not ſerue to begin another contract.

Thy wife can bee no more aſſured to thee, for that ſhee belongs to another man.

Thy Children may bee taken from thee, becauſe they are not thine owne.

What a foole ſhall he be accounted, that buyeth a houſe, to the doore whereof euery man hath a key?

Is not he ſuch a foole, that

that taketh a wife?

Is there not any man in the world, that keepeth a key for the honeſty of any woman?

There are foure things that deceiue a man out of his owne houſe, ſmoke, fire, a rotten roofe, and a churliſh wife.

The ſmoke is remedied, by putting out the fire.

The fire is quenched, by caſting on water.

The roofe is amended, by laying on new Tyles.

But for the frowardnes of a wife, there is no remedy can be found; that is intolera-

lerable for euer.

But I end, leſt that thou thinke I make a hiſtory.

## Chap. V.

*Wherein is recollected diuers examples of Women, that haue murdred their husbands.*

FOr the proofe, and example, and confirmations of this, there ſhall be brought the examples of things not onely paſt, but alſo to come; for that the Stars, in contemplating vpon which, I am wont to ſpend many a faire night, do prognoſticate vnto me

a thouſand grieuous euents to happen, and amongſt others, great plenty of ſuch as theſe to happen, which makes ſo infinit a number of husbands to go to their wiues ſorrowing.

*Agamemnon* was ſlaine by his wife *Clitemneſtra*; the ſonnes of *Ægiſtus*, of the daughters of *Danaus*: and ſo it hapned to the husbands of the ſiſters of *Albina*: *Alexander Pereus*, of his owne wife; *Albinus* of *Roſamond*; *Antioch* of *Laodicea*: ſo it hapned in like manner to *Antonius*, being murdred of *Lucilla*, *Gandulph*

also of his owne wife, *Saleotus* of his spouse, *Ninus Fabius* of *Fabia*, *Tyberius Cesar* of *Agrippina*, and a thousand more, which to collect would be too long: The greater of those either had beene, or after should haue beene kings.

## Chap. VI.

*Wherein is shewne how hard and difficult a thing it is, to keepe the honesty of a woman.*

DOst thou not imagine, that with thy gates shut, thy windowes locked, thy eares open, thy eies watching, a thousand keies, neuer

neuer so many chaines, vigilant friends, infinite guards do keep the modesty of thy wife, when she is in her conceite? choose thee the contrary, shut her in the highest and strongest Tower, that she cannot get out to talke with her louers, by which meanes the wife of old *Fridericus* kept her faith, being inamored of faire *Ordancus*.

Commit her to thy Parents, and she is not safe in their custody, which is made plaine in *A. B.* that was inamored of her owne Brother.

Commit her to her owne friends either, she is as ill, as the example of *Francis*, Queene of *Armenia*. Neither is there any safety in committing her to thy Nephewes, for so *Tractanus* fell in loue with *Hilippia*. Neither is she in safety in being commited to thy sonnes in law: for we know, *Phœdra* did not spare to sport with *Hyppolita*. Neither is she secure in being committed vnto thy friends: for so *Gabrina* could not content her selfe to make one kill her husband, but afterwards fell in

loue with the murtherer.

If ſhe be not chaſte, why did ſhee not at the firſt accord with thee, to place another in her ſtead, as *Elippo* did to *Mariſſo*?

If ſhe once telleth thee all her loue, then know, ſhe goeth about to betray thee, and ſo to gaine opportunity of gayning him.

So did *Edatrice*, the wife of *Eganus*: and if ſhe with him deceiue thee, ſhe will yet perſwade thee, that it is ſome other woman, as *Izabel* did to her husband *Agnutius*.

Count her thy Godren:

and if any man tell thee that her loue is within thy house she will make thee beleeue that it is but a false report; for so did the wife of *John Latharinus*.

If thou setteſt a watch for her at thy gates, she will make shift to bring in her Louer at the roofe of the house, as did the wife of *Galosus*. Nay though she hath sometimes two louers in the house, yet wil she make thee beleeue, that which she knoweth, shalbe sure to make most for her purpose. At one time she will haue *Leanettus*, at another

If

time, *Lambertius.*

If thou beeſt minded to ſhut her out of doores, ſhee will preuent thee, and ſhut thee out firſt: for ſo did the wife of *Latonus.*

Though thou dwelleſt with her in the houſe, and doſt liſten after her, and talke with her, yet at the very ſame time, alſo will ſhe ſport with her louers, as did *Poronella*, who hauing placed her husband in the Barke, whiles ſhe ſayled along the ſhore, made the horns to ſhew on his head.

Yea though thou ſhouldeſt ſee it, and behold it

with thine eyes, yet will ſhe make thee conceale it with thine owne eyes, and compell thee to ſay, thou ſaweſt not that which thou didſt ſee.

Such is the wonderfull audaciouſneſſe of women, as we ſee *Lidia* dealt with *Nichoſtratus*. To be briefe, when thou ſleep'ſt, though ſhe lye on the ſelfe-ſame Bed with thee, though thou ſhouldeſt take another man with thee, to watch her, yet ſhee, in the middeſt of you both, will admit a hyred company, and ſo deceyue and defraud

fraud you both; for ſo was *Fauſtus* and *Fecundus* betrayed of the harlot *Fiametta*.

What then wilt thou do? in what brazen Tower wilt thou ſhut her? with what chaines wilt thou bind her? vnder what locks and keyes wilt thou keepe her? what Champions wilt thou haue to guard her? into whoſe cuſtody wilt thou commit her? for though her huſband had as many eyes, as haires, yet will his wife deceiue him. When it ſhall therfore happen that thou art minded to marry, thou muſt

must pray to God to send thee a good wife, and to take from her all opportunities of offending.

## Chap. VII.

*Wherin are touched diuers customes vsed at Marriages.*

AT the first touching with the hand, it is a custome with many, to buy their wiues with a Ring, that by compassing her finger with a Ring with a precious stone, or with gold, shee thereby circumuents her heart with a desire of gold, of Iemmes and Iewels.

When the Marriage is solemnized, there are none admit-

admitted to be preſent, except the parents, to preuent that the wife may not in one day become both a wife and a Louer.

The husband and the wife are both couered with one vaile, to giue her to vnderſtand, that ſhee muſt conceale her affections from all, except her huſband.

At the ſolemnity of the Marriage, is brought in fire and water, and preſented to the husband, to ſhew therein, that to what end ſoeuer he turneth himſelfe, he is in danger either in being

ing burned or drowned.

Before the Bride, is vſed to be carried Torches burning, and behinde her, a hooke hanging downe; which is done, to ſignifie, that the houſe into which ſhe goeth, ſhee will ſet fire to it, and that ſhe draweth out of the houſe, frō which ſhee commeth, as much as ſhe can.

The Nuptials are commōly ſolemnized at night, as if the Sunne ſcorned to behold them.

The Spouſe is not permitted to tread vpon the threſhold of the dore, be-

cauſe

cauſe the very gate thorow which the husband muſt paſſe, reiecteth the euill, which it ſhould receiue frõ the feete of the wife, which vſeth alſo to bee anointed and ſprinkled with oyle, that it may the leſſe ſmell of that hard cruelty and ſharp ſeuerity that the wife bringeth with her, who at her firſt entrance into the houſe, alwayes ſetteth her right foote forward, to ſignifie, that the laſt thing, which ſhee putteth vnder her husbands roofe, is her heart.

Moreouer, in ſome pla-

ces

ces for those customes, which I reckon vp, are not all vsed in our Countries; but in others the wife neuer vseth to cooke any thing that the husband eateth, to signifie that all her workes be raw.

The day in which the wife is espoused vnto her husband, shee banqueteth amongst her friends, and inuiteth company with her, which is done to the end, that that day shee might be satisfied.

Her body is girt in a girdle of diuers colours, to giue vs to vnderstand, that her

her heart is compaſſed with diuers and ſtrange imaginations.

The husband preſents to her the Spindle and the Rocke; and for that, ſhee reſtoreth to him the Spindle vntwiſting or winding backward: to repreſent her owne ingratitude, that in recompence maketh him as an vntwiſting Spindle.

The Husband ſettes the Rocke to his Wiues ſides, becauſe ſhee will ſet a Helmet on his head, and ſometimes giue him one cuffe to begin withall, and ſo hee may correct her faults, which

which hee may doe iuſtly without fault.

Sometimes at marriages Walnuts are ſcattered vp and downe; which ſheweth, that a woman is like vnto a Walnut, that hath a great ſhell, but a little kernell, faire without, but rotten within: to pull off the firſt barke, we vſe to bruiſe them in our hands, and to breake the ſecond, wee indanger our teeth.

What fruit maketh more noyſe then a Walnut when it is broken?

And what creature hath more pratling thē a womā?

Vnder

Vnder the barke of a Walnut is a faire iuyce, that hee that keepeth it in his hands, is defiled therewith: ſo a woman with her beauty hurteth whomſoeuer beholdeth her.

He that is vnmarried, is called *Cœlibas*, as it were *Cœleſtis*, and remaineth free from bands.

But marriage is called *Ligam*, becauſe it bindeth a knot, becauſe it knitteth a ſtring, and becauſe it tyeth: and a yoke, becauſe it burdeneth: yet is it farre better to carry a yoke, then to marry a wife, for that a yoke

is borne in the day, but laid downe at night; but a woman muſt bee endured euen to the death.

In the Italian tongue, marriage is called *Maritarice*, as *Tarſe il marie*, to commit to the Sea: and *Spouſuer*, in which language the letter S vndoeth the ſignification of the very poſure, with which it is compounded, into a contrary meaning, as the one ſignifies to depoſe; being compounded with S, is to be without repoſe: ſo hee that will marry, muſt bee ſure to forſake all pleaſure

and

and delight.

And very well is marriage in the ſame language called *Roté*, as *Dotanſa*, doubting, that thoſe that are inticed to marry, do alwayes liue in feare, doubting a womans Dowry is giuen in Cuffes, in Garments, in Chaines, and ſuch like.

But if it bee called for gaine, it muſt bee reſtored in Vineyards, in Lands, & in Houſes, it is receiued ſlowly, but reſtored quickly.

A wife with her children quickly conſumeth the apparell ſhe brought, and the

goods ſhee found in the houſe: and if it chance ſhe dye, her Dowry muſt bee reſtored, which is ſure neuer to be loſt.

But let the Patrimony of her husband be conſumed, there is none to reſtore that againe.

Yet a man ſhould thinke it better with reaſon, that children ſhould rather cõſume the goods of the mother, then thoſe of the father, for that they are alwayes more ſurely her children then his.

He therefore that will be married to a wife, let him

firſt

firſt think with himſelfe for what cauſe hee marrieth her.

If thou marrieſt her to gouerne thy houſe, why, thereby thy ſeruants which thou maiſt leaue behinde thee or take, thou maiſt change them at thy diſpoſition, reprehend them after thine owne will, looke vnto them at thine owne pleaſure, and without controlement, giue or take from them thy keyes.

If thou marrieſt her for deſire of children, thou maiſt adopt ſonnes to thy ſelfe, and diſcharge them

after thine owne pleasure and heart.

But if thou coueteſt to haue them legitimate, and thine owne, neither can this deſire of thine bee fulfilled by hauing a wife, and it is better for thee, that more reprehend the folly of thy ſeruants then of thy wife:

If thou deſireſt to haue children of thine owne, I wil tell thee what thou ſhalt doe: Cauſe the mother that beares them, to beſtowe them as a gift vpon thee, wherupon thou maiſt then, without lying, ſay they are thine owne.

If

If thou marrieſt, thinking with thy wiues Dowry to pay thy debts, thou hadſt then better take vp money at intereſt, though thou ſhouldſt pay a hundred for a hundred.

If yet thou thinkeſt with theſe Dowries to match thy daughters, it is better for thee to keepe them thy ſelfe, then to commit them to other folkes cuſtody.

And to be briefe, If thou wouldſt marry for loue, remember that thy wife hath eyes blinded, that her yeres are childiſh, and vndiſcreet, her hands ſtinging, her fa-

ther (perhaps) an old limping man, and her mother a wanton and laſciuious womã, her ſhoulders are winged, her hands polluted, & her body vncleane.

## Chap. VIII.

*Wherein is ſhewed diuers examples of witty men, that haue reprehended Marriage.*

NOw that I haue bound vp all in ſo ſmall a Faggot, theſe my ſpeeches would ſeeme too long, if I ſhould by example endeuour to prooue all that I haue before ſpoken; I will therefore for breuity ſake

content

content my ſelfe with a fewe.

A certaine young man liued, reprehended for taking a wife of a very ſmall ſtature, excuſed himſelfe, by ſaying, Of many euils he had made choyſe of one of the leaſt.

A certaine man being counſelled to marry, by a Philoſopher, who himſelfe had neuer beene married, deſired him to beſtowe of him one of his daughters.

Some haue beene of opinion, that the gods would deſcend and dwell with vs, if it were not that women liued

liued amongſt vs.

There is no man but remembred that *Phoromis*, the King and Law-maker of the Argiues, vſed to ſay, that if hee had not a wife, hee ſhould haue all felicity.

*Socrates*, one of the chiefeſt Philoſophers, had nothing that ſo much annoyed him, as his wife *Xantippa*.

A certaine Philoſopher, who whiles hee was yong, was often demaunded why hee married not? alwayes anſwered, that it was too ſoone: of whom the ſame being asked when hee was old,

old, then replied, that it was too late.

A wiſe man that was poore, being requeſted of an exceeding rich woman to marry her, hee refuſed, ſaying, that ſhe being rich, would thinke to be a husband and miſtris of him that was poore.

One being reprehended for giuing his daughter in marriage to his enemy, ſaid, that he knew not how to be better reuenged of him.

There is nothing in the world more proud then a woman.

*Socrates,*

*Socrates*, of whō we ſpake before, was requeſted of one, that he wold giue him leaue to marry: He ſaid, that whether he married or not, he would after repent him. Onely this difference there was, If, ſaith he, thou repenteſt of not taking a wife, thou mayſt mend thy ſelfe, when thou wilt: but if thou repenteſt when thou haſt taken her, thou canſt not any way finde redreſſe.

*Arrius*, being himſelfe a married man, and ſeeing one lamenting and making great moane, that three of his wiues, one after

ter another, had all hanged themſelues in one tree in his Garden; he with great deſire requeſted a branch thereof, maruailing that the man ſhould ſorrow for ſo good ſucceſſe, bade him proyne and dreſſe that tree well, which brought him forth ſo good fruite, as to rid him of that which ſo much annoyed him.

I remember, that before I compared the wife to an Owle, that is the gazing ſtocke and wonder of all that paſſe by her.

I will now compare her husband to a Cuckow, who is

is wont to couer and hide the egges of other birds, for that ſome woman will rather be content with one eye and one hand, then with one man.

Marchants being at Sea, and ſeeing their Shippe in danger to miſcarry, reſolued to caſt forth ſome of their heauieſt wares. Whervpon one caſt forth his wife, ſaying, It was hard for the Ship to ſuſtaine ſuch a weight.

A wiſe man repented him of three things; of a day loſt, a voyage made by ſea, when hee might haue gone

gone by land, and a ſecrete reuealed to his wife.

## *The concluſion of the Letter.*

I Should haue a long web to weaue, if I ſhould produce examples out of all thoſe ſayings, which confirme theſe my ſpeeches: If I ſhould onely repeate the examples of children, that moſt cruelly haue tortured and murdered their parents; I will therefore conclude, telling thee onely one thing.

That the firſt night that thy

thy wife ſhall enter into thy marriage bed, ſhe will beginne to hope for thy death, which thou ſhalt better beleeue, if thou doeſt but obſerue one ſuſpitious cuſtome that women haue, That the firſt night ſhe lies with thee, will withall diligence obſerue, whether they or their husbands fall firſt aſleepe, prognoſticating thereby, that their death is neereſt.

If I ſhould repeate vnto thee all the ſecrets and vanities of women, what ſtrange things ſhouldſt thou then heare of me? But

I refuſe to relate them, becauſe indeed it is a ſhame to know them.

Some (I know) will condemne me, for that I haue ſpoken, which will be ſuch as then are newly married, or doe intend to marry.

But let them goe on, and in the end they ſhall blame themſelues, for beleeuing me no better.

The firſt moneth that a man is married, I know, he will thinke me a foole.

The ſecond moneth he will call my name in queſtion.

The third moneth, hee

will contend with me.

The fourth moneth hee wil withdraw the ſentence.

The fift moneth he will pay the charges, accounting me a wiſe man, and himſelfe a foole.

But thou wilt ſay, I am no competent Iudge, hauing neuer had experience, what a woman is.

I anſwere thee, that when two men wraſtle together, he that looketh on, beholdeth the game better then themſelues.

But let mee ſay what I will, I know, thy reſolution is wholly bent vpon mar-

riage,

riage, and to a man delibe-
rate we ſeldome vſe to giue
counſell.

Yet let mee aduiſe thee, that with thine eyes ſhut, thy noſe ſtopt, thy fiſt cloſed, & thy ſtomack armed, thou wilt take thy wife as a medicine of Rubarbe. And ſo I deſire the gods to giue thee grace to beleeue this my letter, and to keep thee from euil: which thou ſhalt beſt do, if thou keepe thee from a wife.

*FINIS.*